

**Virginia Comprehensive Assistance Network [VA CAN] Meeting
November 6, 2006
Meeting Notes**

Attendance:

Keith Boisvert—Office of Pollution Prevention, Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
Scott Dailey—Small Business Administration (SBA)
Mike Eisenman—Adjunct faculty, Virginia Commonwealth University; consultant
Dr. Evelyn “Penny” Jez—Office of Consumer Affairs, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS)
Willie Miles, Jr.—Department of Minority Business Enterprise (DMBE)
Stu Neal—International Educational Concepts
Richard Rasmussen and Rodney Sobin—Small Business Assistance Program (SBAP), DEQ

Presentation

Penny Jez provides an overview of consumer protection issues and services provided by the VDACS Office of Consumer Affairs, including its service as a gateway to other agencies with related consumer protection jurisdictions such as the State Corporation Commission (SCC), Motor Vehicle Dealers Board, and Department of Professional and Occupational Registration (DPOR), among others.

The consumer protection field is multifarious, covering such issues as consumer credit, “do not call” lists, charitable organization registrations and solicitations, home improvement disputes, auto purchase and repair problems, health club and travel club practices, prepaid legal services, utility billing problems, identity theft, and disputes related to purchases of defective, incorrect, or nondelivery of products and services. (A list of complaint topics from VDACS appears at the end of these minutes.)

The VDACS website (<http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov>) serves as a gateway or portal to VDACS own services as well as to other agencies. It also provides links to other pertinent organizations and federal resources. These services can also be accessed via VDACS consumer hotline 800-552-9963 or 804-786-2042.

Among the webpage features illustrated were charitable organization database, plus links to GuideStar.org for additional information, as well as the VDACS online complaint database and form.

Dr. Jez noted the General Services Administration’s 2006 Consumer Action Handbook (<http://www.consumeraction.gov>), among other publications, as particularly useful resources for consumers and for service providers.

Roundtable

Stu Neal is now concentrating on his private venture, International Educational Concepts, and consulting, with continued focus on entrepreneurship and small business training, such as EntrePlan training and interactive small business startup materials. The Community College Workforce Alliance (CCWA) will concentrate on training but without focusing on entrepreneurial development of small business as it had previously.

Scott Dailey noted the federal Small Business Administration (SBA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have formed a strategic alliance to link SBA programs and lenders with the EPA SmartWay Transport Partnership (<http://www.epa.gov/smartway/>) for reducing diesel emissions and energy use. Unsecured loans via SBA participating lenders offer better interest rates, cash flow, and other conditions than do many commercial lease arrangements for truck auxiliary power units (APUs). APUs are among a suite of technologies for reducing trucking related emissions and fuel consumption. Mr. Dailey credited continuing discussions with DEQ SBAP for planting the seeds leading to this federal initiative. A press release on the strategic alliance is pending.

Willie Miles noted increased SWAM (small, woman, and minority owned) business certifications and online ability for firms to certify. DMBE is looking to further simplify the certification process. Virginia state procurement is getting more choices as additional SWAM firms enter the system.

Keith Boisvert (DEQ) noted the upcoming Association of Energy Conservation Professionals conference (1-2 DEC, Roanoke). The Department of General Services Division of Purchases & Supply will be holding its 2006 Forum at the Hotel Roanoke November 12-15. DEQ and the Office of Pollution Prevention will participate in several Green Procurement sessions as a part of the Buyers Conference.

Keith also indicated that his participation with DBA Business Roundtables on the Eastern Shore was a good experience with approximately 40 visitors at the session in Melfa.

Richard Rasmussen noted that VACAN has been in operation for four years. There are now about 100 people on the e-mail list of the Network. The Small Business Assistance Program is still working with the Auto Body Shops in Northern Virginia. Additionally, the program is going to research the potential of working with owners and operators of small boilers across the state.

Next Meeting

January 9, 2006 at 10:00 AM DEQ Piedmont Regional Office.

<http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/consumers/cgi-bin/topiclist.cgi?go=GO>

Section 1.01 COMPLAINT TOPIC SELECTOR

<p>ADVERTISEMENT Automobile Ads Misleading Ads</p> <p>ANIMALS & PETS Animals and Pets - Sales Veterinarians</p> <p>APPLIANCES & ELECTRONICS Appliances, Computers & Electronics - Sales and Service Computers - Sales, Service Consumer Products - Extended Warranty Contract Rental Equipment Companies</p> <p>BOATS Defects and Recalls Extended Warranty Contracts Jet Skis Purchases Repairs Not Under Manufacturer Warranty Repairs Under Manufacturer Warranty Trailer Registration Sold by Licensed Dealer Trailer Registration Sold by Other Than Licensed Dealer</p> <p>CHARITABLE GAMING Bingo, Raffles, Etc.</p> <p>CHARITIES Charitable Solicitations</p> <p>CLOTHING Clothing and Shoe Stores Dry Cleaners</p>	<p>MISCELLANEOUS (cont.) Consumer Product Safety Corporate Information Cosmetics Dairy Products Direct Sales Companies Entertainment and Amusement Companies Food - Dairy Products Fraudulent Application Health Spas and Exercise Clubs Home Products, Beauty Aids Junk E-Mail Junk Mail Medical Devices Medicine Membership Campground Pesticides - Fraudulent Application Pesticides - General Information Sweepstakes Telemarketing - Unsolicited Calls</p> <p>MORTGAGE LENDING AND BROKERING Mortgage Companies and Brokers</p> <p>MOTOR VEHICLES Auto Service and Repairs Automobile Ads Boats - Defects and Recalls Boats - Jet Skis Boats - Purchases Boats - Trailer Registration Sold by Licensed Dealer Boats - Trailer Registration Sold by Other Than Licensed Dealer Cars - Extended Warranty Contract NOT With Dealer Cars - Extended Warranty Contract With the Dealer Cars - Manufacturer's Warranty</p>	<p>TELEMARKETING (cont.) Junk Mail Telemarketing - Unsolicited Calls</p> <p>TRANSPORTATION Airline Complaints Auto Service and Repairs Motorcycles - Service and Repairs Moving and Storage Companies Titles and Registrations Trailers - Extended Warranty Contracts Vehicle Recalls</p> <p>TRAVEL & LEISURE Airline Complaints Hotel and Motel - Billing, Services Membership Campground Recreational Vehicles - Service and Repairs Timeshare Travel Agencies, Clubs, Tours</p> <p>UTILITIES Cable TV - Billing, Service Electric Utilities Municipal Utilities Natural Gas Utilities Private Water Companies Satellite TV - Billing, Service Telephone - Local Service Providers Telephone - Long Distance Billing Problems Telephone - Long Distance Providers Telephone - Long Distance Service Plans Telephone - Problems with 900 Numbers</p> <p>WARRANTIES</p>
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<p>COLLECTIONS Billing Issues Collection Agencies Credit Repair Credit Reporting Agencies</p> <p>COMPUTERS Computers - Sales, Service</p> <p>CONTRACTORS Home Improvements, Repairs Over \$1,000 Home Improvements, Repairs Under \$1,000</p> <p>CREDIT, FINANCE & BANKING Billing Issues Collection Agencies Credit Repair Credit Reporting Agencies Lay-Aways Out-Of-State Chartered Banks Payday Loans Rent-To-Own Companies State Chartered Banks and Lending Institutions</p> <p>DIRECT SALES Direct Sales Companies Magazines, Books, and Encyclopedias Mail/Catalog Order Houses</p> <p>FOOD Dairy Products Food Safety Imported Food and Dairy Products Imported Meat and Poultry Meat and Poultry Nutritional and General Labeling Restaurant Issues Seafood Processing Shellfish Shucking and Crab Picking Weight and Measure Labeling</p> <p>FUEL Fuel - Price Discrepancies Fuel - Quality and Quantity Issues Price Discrepancies Quality and Quantity Issues</p> <p>HEALTH & FITNESS Audiologists and Speech Therapists Body Piercing Consumer Product Safety Cosmetics Dentists Drug Stores Food - Dairy Products Food - Imported Food and Dairy Products Food - Imported Meat and Poultry Food - Meat and Poultry Food - Nutritional and General Labeling Food - Restaurant Issues Food - Safety Food - Seafood Processing Food - Shellfish Shucking and Crab Picking Food - Weight and Measure Labeling Food Safety Funeral Directors and Embalmers Health Spas and Exercise Clubs Hearing Aid Specialists Home Products, Beauty Aids Medical Devices</p>	<p>Dealer Practices Defects and Recalls Jet Skis Lemon Law Motorcycles - Extended Warranty Contracts Motorcycles - Service and Repairs New Car Sales Odometer Tampering Purchases RV's - Extended Warranty Contracts Recreational Vehicles - Service and Repairs Rental Cars and Trucks State Inspection Temporary License Plates Titles and Registrations Towing - Abandoned Vehicles on Public Road Towing - Fees Towing - From Private Property - Access to Impound Lot Towing - From Private Property - Signage Towing - From Private Property - Towing and Storage Fees Towing - General Information Towing - Immobilized Vehicles Towing - Local Ordinances Towing - Location of Towed Vehicles Trailer Registration Sold by Licensed Dealer Trailer Registration Sold by Other Than Licensed Dealer Used Car Sales Vehicle Recalls</p> <p>MOVING COMPANIES Moving and Storage Companies</p> <p>PESTICIDES Fraudulent Application General Information</p> <p>PROFESSIONAL SERVICES Accountants Appraisers Architects Asbestos Abatement Attorneys Auctioneers Audiologists and Speech Therapists Barbers Body Piercing Branch Pilots Cemetery - For Profit Cemetery - Non Profit Condominiums Contractors Cosmetologists Dentists Funeral Directors and Embalmers Geologists Hearing Aid Specialists Home Improvements, Repairs Over \$1,000 Insurance Companies Insurance Fraud Jewelry Stores Land Surveyors Landscape Architects Landscaping and Tree Service Lead Abatement Medical Doctors (Physicians) Nail Technicians Nurses Nursing Home Administrators Opticians Optometrists Pharmacists</p>	<p>Boats - Extended Warranty Contracts Boats - Repairs Not Under Manufacturer Warranty Boats - Repairs Under Manufacturer Warranty Cars - Extended Warranty Contract NOT With Dealer Cars - Extended Warranty Contract With the Dealer Cars - Manufacturer's Warranty Consumer Products - Extended Warranty Contract Extended Warranty Contracts Motorcycles - Extended Warranty Contracts RV's - Extended Warranty Contracts Repairs Not Under Manufacturer Warranty Repairs Under Manufacturer Warranty Trailers - Extended Warranty Contracts</p> <p>WEIGHTS AND MEASURES Fertilizers and Soil Amendments Firewood Quantity Fuel - Price Discrepancies Fuel - Quality and Quantity Issues Labels - General Discrepancies Liming Materials Measuring Devices Potting Soil - Labeling and Contamination Price Scanning Devices Seeds - Purity, Germination, Etc. Weights and Measures</p> <p>WIRELESS - CELLULAR PHONES Wireless - Cellu</p>
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Medical Doctors (Physicians) Medicine Nail Technicians Nurses Nursing Home Administrators Nutritional and General Labeling Opticians Optometrists Pharmacists Psychologists Restaurant Issues Seafood Processing Shellfish Shucking and Crab Picking Tattooer Weight and Measure Labeling	Photography - Film Processing, Studios Polygraph Examiners Professional Counselors Professional Engineers Psychologists Real Estate Social Workers Soil Scientist Tattooer Timeshare Tradesmen Travel Agencies, Clubs, Tours Veterinarians Waste Facility Operators Water Wastewater Works	
HOME & GARDEN Carpets and Floor Covering Contractors Fertilizers and Soil Amendments Firewood Quantity Furniture - Sales, Upholstery Home Cleaning Home Improvements, Repairs Under \$1,000 Land Surveyors Landscape Architects Landscaping and Tree Service Lawn and Garden Equipment Lead Abatement Liming Materials Potting Soil - Labeling and Contamination Seeds - Purity, Germination, Etc.	RECREATION Bicycles Hotel and Motel - Billing, Services	
	RENTAL Rent-To-Own Companies Rental Equipment Companies Rental Property - Landlord and Tenant Issues	
	RETAIL STORES Appliances, Computers & Electronics - Sales and Service Clothing and Shoe Stores Department Stores Drug Stores Hardware Stores Jewelry Stores Labels - General Discrepancies Lawn and Garden Equipment Lay-Aways Magazines, Books, and Encyclopedias Mail/Catalog Order Houses Measuring Devices Price Scanning Devices Retail Stores Sporting Goods Weights and Measures	
HOUSING Fair Housing Landlord - Tenant Issues		
IDENTITY THEFT Identity Theft		
INSURANCE Insurance Companies Insurance Fraud		
INTERNET E-Mail Phishing Scams Internet Auctions and Service Providers		
MANUFACTURED HOUSING Mobile Home - Complaints		
MISCELLANEOUS Bingo, Raffles, Etc. Business Opportunities	SECURITIES & RETAIL FRANCHISING Securities, Franchises, Investment Fraud	
	SPORTING GOODS Bicycles Sporting Goods	
	TELEMARKETING Junk E-Mail	